

## **Tool 5**

### **Relevant Programs, Requirements and Resources**

This tool is a continuation of the listing of drivers, resources and data provided in Chapter 2



## Relevant Programs, Requirements and Resources

### *National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)*

The RTCA is a program to further the mission of the NPS by working with community groups and local, State, and federal government agencies to preserve open space, conserve rivers, and develop trails and greenways. RTCA staff can facilitate and bring expertise to the implementation of project(s) recommended in a watershed plan that coincide with the RTCA and NPS mission of outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation. The RTCA program implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of the National Park Service in communities across America. More information can be found at: <http://www.nps.gov/rtca/>

### *Maryland's Clean Water Action Plan*

The Maryland Clean Water Action Plan (CWAP) charts a course toward fulfilling the original goals of the Clean Water Act. Maryland's 1998 Clean Water Action Plan called for the assessment of all State waters to determine the degree of nonpoint source impairment and to establish restoration priorities. The resulting Unified Watershed Assessment (UWA) looked at all 134 watersheds in the state in terms of both watershed impairments and significant water resource values. The assessment categorized watersheds as either in need of protection, restoration, or, in some instances, both.

The resulting assessment report provides a lot of good baseline data that can be used to characterize the current conditions of a watershed, although some of the data and references to the Watershed Restoration Action Strategy process may be somewhat outdated. The watershed categorizations can be used to highlight and determine which watersheds need attention first. Categorization and baseline data should also be used to set initial goals and set direction of watershed planning. The full assessment report can be found at <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/cwap/>.

### *Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act*

The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, Public Law 83-566, Stat. 666, (see exhibit 500–1) authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to cooperate with State and local agencies in planning and carrying out works of improvement for soil conservation and for other purposes. It provides for technical, financial, and credit assistance by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to local organizations representing the people living in small watersheds. It also provides for needed additional treatment and protection of federally owned lands within such watersheds. Unlike other national conservation programs, the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program requires the development of a physically, environmentally, socially, and economically sound plan of improvements scheduled for implementation over a period of years. It uses a project-type approach to accomplish this. Firm commitments are required from local organizations (including States). They must:

- Share the costs of installation,
- Assume operation and maintenance responsibilities (with certain exceptions on Federal land), and
- Meet other requirements as a condition for Public Law 83-566 assistance in carrying out the improvements.

The National Watershed Manual outlines the minimum requirements for administering the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act and is available at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watershed/NWSM.html>

### *Community Watershed Assessment Handbook*

Communities just getting started should also review the Chesapeake Bay Program's Community Watershed Assessment Handbook which was developed to assist communities with gathering and evaluating information prior to developing the watershed plan itself. The purpose of the handbook is to outline a basic process for assessing a community's current and anticipated future watershed conditions. In addition, the manual offers guidance for using the resulting assessment information as a foundation for future watershed management planning. Available online at: [http://www.chesapeakebay.net/pubs/watershed\\_assess/](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/pubs/watershed_assess/)

### *Maryland Surf Your Watershed*

The Surf Your Watershed project is a cooperative effort between the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources to maintain a catalog of important environmental and programmatic information for Maryland's 8-digit watersheds. MD DNR hopes to begin updating the data in the near future, but there is not currently a long-term plan to keep the information current. Therefore, this may provide useful historical data, which includes parameters such as impervious cover percentages, population densities, forest cover, and wetland loss. Available online: <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/watersheds/surf/>

### *Maryland Environmental Trust*

The Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) is a statewide local land trust with the goal of preserving of open land, such as farmland, forest land, and significant natural resources through conservation easements. MET also provides assistance to citizen groups in formation and operation of land trusts by offering training. In addition, MET gives grants to environmental education projects and provides a directory of local land trust on their website.

The Maryland Environmental Trust may be valuable partners for protection oriented watershed plans. For more information view their organizational website at: <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/met/>.

### *Maryland's Rural Legacy Program*

The Program encourages local governments and private land trusts to identify Rural Legacy Areas and to competitively apply for funds to complement existing land preservation efforts or to develop new ones. Easements or fee estate purchases are sought from willing landowners in order to protect areas vulnerable to sprawl development that can weaken an area's natural resources, thereby jeopardizing the economic value of farming, forestry, recreation and tourism. Additional information is available online at: <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/rurallegacy/>

### *Maryland's Green Print Program*

GreenPrint is aimed at protecting the most valuable remaining ecological lands in Maryland. The purpose of the program is threefold:

- Identify, using the most up-to-date computer mapping techniques, the most important unprotected natural lands in the state;
- Link, or connect, these lands through a system of corridors or connectors; and
- Save those lands through targeted acquisitions and easements.

The DNR GreenPrint program is a state land acquisition program. However, DNR may choose to pass funds through to a local government or private land trust. Local partners who wish to suggest a GreenPrint acquisition project should contact the Program Open Space administrator for their region. Maps of greenprint areas identified across the state can be found online at: <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/greenways/greenprint/>.

#### *Maryland Stormwater Management Regulations*

In 1982, the General Assembly passed the “Stormwater Management Act,” and shortly thereafter, stormwater management regulations were adopted. Since that time, MDE has revised the requirements for stormwater management and now provides explicit guidance on required measures, incentives and credits, innovative stormwater management practices, and redevelopment criteria. For more information on MDE’s extensive stormwater management program and to view the 2000 *Maryland Stormwater Design Manual*, see: <http://www.mde.state.md.us/Programs/WaterPrograms/SedimentandStormwater/index.asp>

#### *Maryland Erosion and Sediment Control Regulations*

Maryland’s Erosion Control Law and regulations specify the general provisions for program implementation; provisions for delegation of enforcement authority; requirements for erosion and sediment control ordinances; exemptions from plan approval requirements; requirements for training and certification programs; criteria for plan submittal, review, and approval; procedures for inspection and enforcement; and applicant responsibilities. Clearly defining minimum standards is essential to make erosion and sediment control work. MDE has established minimum criteria for effective erosion and sediment control practices. The 1994 Standards and Specifications for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control are incorporated by reference into State regulations and serve as the official guide for erosion and sediment control principles, methods, and practices. For more information and to view current state standards, see: [http://www.mde.state.md.us/Programs/WaterPrograms/SedimentandStormwater/home/erosion\\_sediment.asp](http://www.mde.state.md.us/Programs/WaterPrograms/SedimentandStormwater/home/erosion_sediment.asp)

